

Nevada County Transportation Commission

The Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency for Nevada County. NCTC coordinates state and federal transportation programs for Nevada County, the City of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and the Town of Truckee.

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The Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter is published bimonthly. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please write or call the Nevada County Transportation Commission office.

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Nevada County Transportation Commission Newsletter

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“Creating a better future by building upon successes of the past”



Changes In The Making



Traffic turning onto La Barr Meadows Road from SR 49 north-bound. Mountain Air Mobile Home Park is located on the left and Sierra Foothill Real Estate Office is across the street.

The **La Barr Meadows Road** and SR 49 intersection has drawn considerable public attention lately. Due to safety concerns along this portion of the SR 49 corridor, Nevada County citizens are circulating a petition requesting a traffic signal be installed at the intersection and that the speed limit be reduced in the area. Penny Watson, a broker at the Real Estate Office located at this intersection, spearheaded the petition and presented her concerns to the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) at our December 17th meeting.

NCTC Involvement – This was not the first time our Commission was made aware of safety issues in the La Barr Meadows vicinity. On March 12, 2002 NCTC Executive Director Daniel Landon and Commissioner Bruce Conklin, along with Lt. Ed Michalkiewicz of the CHP and County and Caltrans staff, met with representatives from the Foothill Community Church and Station #88 of the Nevada County Consolidated Fire District to discuss their concerns over the safety of drivers making turns onto and off SR 49 without a continuous left turn lane in place. These concerns were similar to comments regarding traffic operations on SR 49 in this vicinity by residents of the Mountain Air Mobile Home Park. Caltrans supported the idea of the church and fire station sharing a driveway to reduce access points onto SR 49, but funding was not available to proceed with project implementation. Caltrans offered to pursue minor project funding, but State Budget problems eliminated access to these types of funds.



Intersection sign and flashing lights installed recently. The orange truck, above, is planning it's exit from La Barr Meadows Road.

At the April 2003 NCTC meeting, Commissioners Bedwell and Krage discussed with Caltrans Project Manager Tom Brannon the options available to provide a short-term fix of the SR 49 corridor from Kenwood Drive north to the La Barr Meadows intersection.

A project is on the books to widen SR 49 to five lanes from the Wolf/Combie Road intersection up to McKnight Way. The La Barr Meadows Road section of the highway has been under discussion numerous times because of the ingress/egress issues of the mobile home parks, private driveways, the church and fire station, as well as, the accidents that have occurred at La Barr Meadows Road. The Commission is planning to widen SR 49, as funds become available, and this section at La Barr Meadows is being considered as the first phase due to right-of-way and safety issues. If NCTC is successful in getting a project into the 2004 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), construction could be programmed for 2008/09.

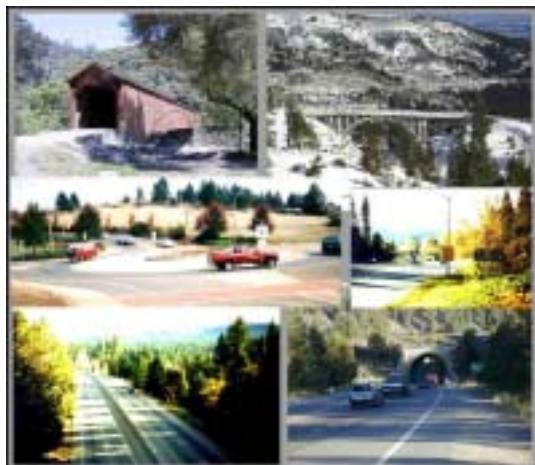
Inside this Issue:

Page 2 – La Barr Meadows Cont.
Page 3 – Community Update

(continued on page 2)

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Caltrans and CHP Contributing Efforts – Ann Marie Robinson, Caltrans Regional Planner/Liaison for Nevada County, has put in many hours organizing and coordinating the efforts of all the stakeholders in the La Barr Meadows. Ann Marie arranged for Robert Peterson of Caltrans to give an accident history report for this location at the August 20th NCTC meeting. Members of the public attended the meeting to share their concerns and solutions for the La Barr Meadows portion of SR 49. Suggestions presented at the meeting are listed in the next column. Lt. Ed Michalkiewicz of the Grass Valley branch of California Highway Patrol (CHP) was at the same meeting, providing information, answering questions, and expressed his willingness to work with all involved to come up with solutions.



Car waiting to pull out from Welsh Lane, just south of La Barr Meadows Road. Mtn. Air Mobile Home Park is across the road.

Commissioner Guerra also shared her concerns at the August 20th NCTC meeting for bus passengers who disembark at this location and have to cross SR 49 to get to their mobile home parks. Since that meeting, Gold Country Stage Manager, Bill Derrick, modified Route 5 to provide direct service into the Forest Springs and Mountain Air Mobile Home Parks on SR 49 near La Barr Meadows Road.

Ann Marie shared her observation at the October 15th NCTC meeting, that people don't use their headlights when driving this section of SR 49. She requested support from the California Highway Patrol to enforce headlight laws and speed limit maximums in this area. The California Highway Patrol has promised more patrolling in this area and will use a speed trailer to bring driver awareness up as to the actual speeds people drive along this populated portion of SR 49.

Highway 49 Safety Clinic - Ann Marie has also been in contact with the mobile home parks in that area to set up driver education training classes. The first of several "Highway 49 Safety Clinic" workshops will be held on March 23rd at 10:00 A.M. at the Mountain Air Mobile Home Park located at 14338 State Highway 49, Grass Valley, CA. This first workshop has been developed for the residents of the Mountain Air Mobile Home Park living adjacent to State Route 49. The California Highway Patrol (CHP), Gold Country Stage, the Nevada County Transportation Commission, and

Caltrans are sponsoring the "Highway 49 Safety Clinic" workshops.

Topics Include:

Driving Tips

- Driving State Route 49 – Your Lifeline
- You – The Driver

Transit Changes

- Schedule changes and enhancements

CHP

- How speed limits are set
- Special enforcement unit
- Mature Driving Program

Long-Term State Route 49 Improvements

- What does the future hold?

Question and Answer Session

Cookies and Punch will be served and door prizes including free transit passes will be given away. *If you would like to donate a door prize for these workshops please call the NCTC office at 265-3202.*

Suggestions/Responses for La Barr Meadows Road Intersection Improvements:

- **Signalize the La Barr Meadows intersection.**

♣ Caltrans Traffic staff performed a Signal Warrant study and this intersection does not meet accident warrant to install a traffic signal. Even if warrants are met, they would need to construct additional lanes, similar to Lime Kiln, to ensure we don't trade broadside accidents for rear-end collisions.

- **Install warning signs with flashing beacons.**

♣ Intersection warning signs and flashing beacons were installed December 17, 2003 in advance of the intersection of La Barr Meadows Road in both directions on SR 49.

- **Restripe intersection by La Barr Meadows to allow left turn refuge into Mountain Air Mobile Home Park.**

♣ Reconfiguring ingress/egress at Mountain Air is being considered.

- **Lower the speed limit in this populated area of SR49.**

♣ Based on State laws and traffic engineering studies, this is not feasible as it is not enforceable and would likely cause more collisions.

- **Change timing of light at Alta Sierra to provide more gaps in northbound traffic.**

♣ Caltrans Traffic Signal staff stated this would not be helpful. It would increase congestion for mainline traffic, cause more delay, and could possibly increase rear end collisions as traffic stops further back from the signal.

- **Install rumble strips in the pavement at La Barr Meadows intersection.**

♣ Not recommended, as it would increase noise pollution and usually rumble strips indicate an action such as slowing down before a stop sign. **NCTC**

Thank You Grape Growers

The Sierra Grape Growers Association weathered heavy rains and cold temperatures on December 6th to plant 200 more pine trees at the Brunswick Road/SR 49 landscape project. Besides the Grape Growers, Ann Marie Robinson and Executive Director Dan Landon were on-hand that day to pull out dead seedlings, replant new seedlings, and clean up the garbage that collects at this exit.



Truck crossing northbound lane of SR 49 to go south

ITS Safety Evaluation Team

NCTC's Executive Director Dan Landon contacted The University of Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies (ITS) Safety Evaluation Team requesting their assistance in evaluating four sections of roadway in Nevada County deemed as problem spots. One of the areas to be studied was the intersection of SR 49 at La Barr Meadows Road. A team of two highly qualified traffic flow/collision/safety engineers visited Nevada County January 29th and 30th to evaluate this intersection on SR 49. The ITS Safety Evaluation Team also studied the South Auburn Street/Neal Street/Colfax Avenue intersection, the Brunswick Road corridor from SR 174 to Burma Road, and the Brunswick Road/Idaho Maryland Road intersection. Their report will help identify viable safety and operational improvements. **NCTC**

Gold Flat Roundabout Public Meeting



SR 49 Northbound Off-Ramp at the Gold Flat Interchange

Caltrans will be conducting a public meeting to display the proposed roundabout project located on the east side of the of the Gold Flat interchange. Caltrans staff will be present to answer any questions. It will be held Thursday, February 19th from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the Caltrans Maintenance Station located at 10057 Gold Flat Road. Signs will be posted to direct you to the building where this project will be reviewed. **NCTC**



We want to thank the Sierra Grape Growers Association, Tanglewood Forest Gallery, Ann Marie Robinson, Hansen Brothers, and all the others who have worked and donated materials to beautify the Brunswick Road area of SR 49. **NCTC**

Upcoming NCTC Meetings

The next two meetings of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, February 18, 2004 at 8:30 a.m., Nevada County Board Chambers, 950 Maidu Avenue, 1st floor, Nevada City, CA

Wednesday, March 17, 2004 at 8:30 a.m., Grass Valley Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, CA